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Educational Television Series 1968-69

Teachers' Guide

DEPT. OF EDUCATION
HISTORICAL COLLECTION

Geography

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS

Impressions of the Soviet Union

Educational Television Branch
ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
1670 Bayview Avenue, Toronto 17

GEOGRAPHY
Intermediate and Senior Divisions

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION

Four programs, 20 minutes each.

Designed for Grade 12 geography students, but of interest to students at the Grade 10 level also.

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INTRODUCTION

The emphasis in this series of four programs is on human geography. The assumption is that students have access to sources that permit the study of physical and economic geography, but would benefit from a sort of field trip that permitted them to meet a wide spectrum of the people of the Soviet Union. The camera and the tape recorder have captured a great variety of social, recreational and economic activities. In the first two programs, there is little attempt to make a direct connection between the life of the people and the physical or economic geography of the land. In the last two, this connection is more explicit.

An attempt has been made to keep the commentary at a minimum without sacrificing continuity, so that the viewer can absorb the "feel" of the sights and sounds of the locale. It is hoped that, confronted with these sights and sounds, the student will be motivated to raise questions about the geography of the U.S.S.R. that he might otherwise have overlooked.

PROGRAM I

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The purpose of this program is to introduce two significant elements in the Soviet Union's development — the immensity of the land and the variety of ethnic groups, as well as to depict life in various cities of the federation.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The major ethnic groups are located on a map, and some attention is paid to political structure. Unity and uniformity in the U.S.S.R. are typified in the presence of Leninist symbols, the domination of Moscow, and the attitude to the arts. One sees too, an increasing urbanization and westernization in the society's desire for and production of consumer goods. Despite this tendency, local and regional customs are protected, though religion is not encouraged. Women are seen to be more uninhibitedly equal here to men in professions and in the labour force than they are in North America. One is left with the impression that a common cultural heritage between the Soviet Union and the West exists, as well as a common desire for a comfortable life.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. The key to understanding the U.S.S.R. is to comprehend its size and location. Review its latitude and project it to North America for a comparison of size, climate, and location of settlement.
2. Discuss the effect of its continental location on the Soviet Union's development as a European nation. Consider the Mongol invasions, the work of Peter the Great, the coastline, and communications.
3. Consider priorities, problems, and potential in co-ordinating a country the size of the Soviet Union.
4. Plot the location of the cities below which will be mentioned in the program; place them in their geographic environment and explore why they developed where they did.
   Moscow, Dushanbe, Minsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Birobidzhan, Leningrad, Kiev, Ulan Ude, and Khabarovsk.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Were the impressions of the Soviet people, as presented in the program, what the class expected?
2. Discussion, research, or projects could be conducted on the following.

   The proposition that the Soviet Union is a continental empire:
   - the structure of the empire, ethnic groups within it, and how they came to be part of it.
   - ways in which unity is achieved.
   - ethnic areas from which problems might come.
   - political and economic structure of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.
   - significance of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, 1968.

   The idea that the U.S.S.R. is European or Western in its aims and standards; where the differences lie and what produces them.

   An ethnic group or nationality: its history, characteristics, achievements, and involvement within the federation.

   An analysis of marketing, advertising, and consumer production in North America in one particular field, keeping in mind comparisons with the Soviet Union as seen in the program.

   Lenin's contribution in shaping political, economic, and social goals.

   Russian literature and music: since writers were not encouraged to express an opinion on controversial subjects, either under the tsars or after the Revolution, they expressed their feelings in their fiction and poetry. The following list of writers and composers could provide starting points for research projects.

   Nineteenth Century Writers:

   Gogol — *Dead Souls* — emancipation of the serfs.
   — *The Revizor* — (The Inspector-General) — ridiculed corruption and inefficient bureaucracy.
   Turgenev — *Memoirs of a Sportsman* — emancipation of the serfs.
   Pushkin — *The Village* — evils of serfdom.
   — *Eugene Onegin* — a novel in verse and the pattern for future novelists.
   — His dramatic poems and fairy tales provided themes for most of the outstanding Russian composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
   Gontcharov — *Oblomov* — the life of the idle rich nobility from birth till death in the mid-nineteenth century.
   Dostoyevsky — represented the Russian character at its best and its worst: *Poor People, Crime and Punishment* (an ethical analysis), *The Brothers Karamazov.*
   Tolstoy — *The Cossacks, War and Peace.*
   Chekhov — *The Cherry Orchard* — a play about the rising merchant class, and the passing of the land-owning

aristocracy; compare *Gone With the Wind.*

Gorky — *The Lower Depths* — the Russian underworld.

Twentieth Century Russian writers are usually found in anthologies. See **Bibliography.**

Composers:

Glinka, Balakirev, Cesar Cui, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky showed the influence of current events.

Myaskovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovitch, and Khatchaturian are important twentieth century composers.

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notes

PROGRAM 2

YOUTH

Lenin said, "Without teaching there is no knowledge; without knowledge there is no communism." He might have added truthfully, "Without a dedicated youth the new society will not be achieved." The purpose of this film is to show the importance of young people to the communist state, and how the system of education seeks to create the type of person it needs.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The montage of youth with which the program begins is followed by some footage of Lenin in the early stages of the Revolution. This juxtaposition underlines the historical background of upheaval and warfare against which the aspirations of the Soviets must be viewed.

The program indicates that the Soviet system of education is uniform, scientifically weighted, and taken seriously by the teachers and students. There are interviews with a teacher, university students and a young factory worker, all of whom seem to have a clear idea of their role in creating a strong Soviet society. Training in this ideal of co-operative group activity is provided from an early age in the Young Pioneers and in the Children's Railway. The film ends with a marriage at a Wedding Palace, a state institution. We are left with the impression of the pre-eminence of the State and of the respect and willing labour devoted to it.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Examine the 1960's with respect to its essential characteristics, changes from the previous decade, the place of 'Youth' and the 'Establishment', the evaluation of goals in our society, and forecasts in education, politics, economics, and social conditions for the 1970's.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Using information from the program discuss:
   - how the state supplants other institutions, such as the family or the church, in the affections of the people.
   - impressions gathered from the interview with the teacher.
   - principles taught by the education system.
   - comparisons of Soviet and Canadian university students.
   - the status of women.
   - "private" activities of youth, as compared to prescribed activities.
   - the relationships between education and environment, education and the people it serves, education and goals. Consider various countries and systems. Will Soviet goals in education ever change?
2. Projects, debates or panels on:
   a) Is a Just Society possible? Consider one or two of the following attempts: Plato's Utopia, Owen's New Harmony, Fascism, Marxism, the American Dream, anarchy. Examine these attempts with respect to:
      - background or motives
      - leadership suggested
      - goals and methods
      - relationship of the theory to its environment
      - success or failure
      - conclusions — Is it worthwhile to create a Just Society? Dangers of failure? Possible application for the U.S.S.R. and Canada? Similarities in the different systems?

   b) "All troubles will be eliminated by science."
   "There is no greater sin than an unplanned action."
   "The new man should be educated, by force if necessary."
   "When one is hungry, material affluence is a blessing, but when one becomes sated, other aspects

of life become paramount."

c) Set up a workable model curriculum on Russian goals, areas of study, methods, probable relationship with, or effect on society and environment.

3. Do the youth of the U.S.S.R. seem to have a strong sense of purpose? Is that a good thing?

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notes

PROGRAM 3

TWO LATITUDES – YAKUTSK AND DUSHANBE

PROGRAM CONTENT

This program shows that the Soviet Union not only covers a vast amount of territory from east to west, but also provides an amazing range of climate and relief from north to south. Two regions, widely separated in latitude, are dealt with in respect to the uses their particular environments are put to. However, in spite of the great differences in their latitudes and environments, these two regions also illustrate the theme of unity in diversity.

The two cities chosen for comparison are Yakutsk, built on permafrost in the Taiga, and Dushanbe, capital of the Tadjhik republic immediately north of Afghanistan. Tadjhikstan is a hot, dry, hilly area with good soil where cotton is intensively cultivated on collective farms using irrigation from the mountain stream. In contrast, Yakutsk is an outpost of settlement on the Lena River where timber and furs form a significant part of the economy. From the visual evidence presented, the viewer can contrast culture, housing, ethnic types, water problems and differences in vegetation.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Locate the regions and cities to be seen in the film, and note the regional differences.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Compare Yakutsk and Yellowknife. Investigage prices and wages at Yellowknife. What supports higher costs? Would the situation be the same in the U.S.S.R.?

2. What does the income level appear to be in Dushanbe? To what factors would you relate this?

3. Discuss collectivization in the Soviet Union with reference to the following:
   - historic roots
   - purposes and plans in the present
   - why three types of farm ownership exist
   - areas in which state ownership works best
   - effect of urbanization on collective farming
   - comparison of success in collective farming with nationalized industry.
   - comparison with the Canadian Government's problems with prairie wheat farmers or Ontario dairy producers.
   - comparison of the relative productivity of Yakutsk and Dushanbe.

4. Projects, research, or discussion could be conducted on the topics listed below:
   - Can cities be built on permafrost in Canada?
   - An analysis of some other area in the Soviet Union where intensive agriculture or specialization is successfully used.
   - Two Canadian cities remote in distance and dissimilar in economic arrangement, showing how they respond to their environment and their place in the total economy.
   - The problem of unity in Canada with emphasis on economic aspects; a comparison of the autonomous republics in the Soviet Union with the idea of a republic of Quebec or a state in British Columbia.
   - The nationalization of an industry; where, how and whether it works.
   - The Taiga.
   - "The primitive is a condition of life wherein the instinctive, subjective, and collective values tend to predominate; the civilized condition of life is where the rational, objective, and individual take command." (Laurens Van der Post)
     Within the framework of this definition, examine the Soviet Union, liason between the U.S.S.R. and Africa, the Chinese Revolution, and North American society.

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notes

PROGRAM 4

SIBERIA

The purpose of this program is to show Siberia as a primary resource supply for the U.S.S.R., to show the connection between Soviet education and the activities of young technologists in this particular region, and to examine both the problems and achievements here in the last forty years. (For purposes of the program, Siberia and the Soviet Far East are grouped.)

PROGRAM CONTENT

Having talked about the resources with which Siberia is lavishly endowed, the program selects certain settlements for closer study: the diamond mines at Myrni, the port of Nahodka on the Pacific Coast, a hydro station at Bratsk near Lake Baikal (reputed to be the world's largest), and the aluminium works at Irkutsk. Students will also get an idea of the importance of engineering and science in these projects. They will see what a Siberian city looks like, with glimpses of Khabarovsk, Ulan Ude, Birobidzhan, and Novosibirsk. Finally, an interview will be held with Siberian-born Professor Krotov at Irkutsk who discusses his own dedication to Siberia, and the willingness with which young people work in this northern frontier.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Locate Siberia on a map. Compare its area with the area of the U.S.S.R. and examine its climate and relief. Suggest problems in developing Siberia and consider the economic advantages of developing it or leaving it idle.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Make a map showing mineral deposits and power potential in Siberia. Figure out as many combinations of potential industry and power as possible. Plan cities in appropriate locations and show transportation routes to possible markets.
2. Using information from the program, discuss:
   - Siberia's function within the total economy
   - incentives for Russian immigration to Siberia
   - emphasis on culture in Siberia
   - the substitution of technocracy for bureaucracy
   - Siberia as a frontier and symbol of a better life.
3. Compare problems, methods, and progress in developing Siberia and the Canadian North with reference to:
   - latitudes of significant settlement
   - relations with the natives
   - foreign influences
   - climate
   - available resources
   - food supply
   - transportation and markets
   - character of settlement; incentives; finance
   - problems of single-industry economy
   - economic relationship with the rest of the country.
   - relative value of Siberia and northern Canada.
4. Choose a Canadian counterpart to the Bratsk hydro project. Show where and how it is or could be developed, and its use.
5. Conduct a debate or panel discussion on the following resolutions.

   "The struggle for Socialism is nice, but socialism without a struggle – that is a cemetery."

   "The future is more important than the present."
6. Reading materials on Siberian labour camps include Dostoyevsky's *The Houses of the Dead and One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitzyn.

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notes

Scheduling for this series can be found in the monthly ETVO SCHEDULE sent to all teachers. For long-term planning, reference can be made to the ETV Schedule (Calendar), which lists programming from October to June and was mailed to all teachers. However, it is most important to check the monthly ETVO SCHEDULE for the last minute changes always involved in extensive programming.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION